



Improve Your Negotiating Skills

Depending on your personal preferences and/or skill set, negotiation may be an aspect of real estate that you love or one you dread. Yet, almost every part of the real estate transactions—from establishing a commission rate with sellers to reaching the final terms of the purchase contract—requires negotiation. Whatever your current abilities, improving your negotiating skills will help you to better serve your clients and get them the best sale price or purchase price possible.

For more, check out our [tool kit on negotiation](#).

Here are some practical tips to help you beef up your negotiating skills:

- Make a list of what you and your clients want to achieve from the negotiation. Then rank those goals from the most to least important.
- For each negotiating point, determine what ranges you can work within, including minimums, targets, and maximums.
- Determine in advance what concessions you can make, based on your clients' ranking of goals. With each concession, ask for a tradeoff ("If we can come down by \$3,000, then will you remove this contingency?").
- Try to anticipate what negotiating demands the other party might make, and prepare and practice your responses to those requests.
- Maintain a demeanor that is calm, pleasant, and unflappable. Concentrate on creating an atmosphere of joint problem-solving that focuses on the benefits to all parties.
- Learn as much as you can about the situation, issues, and the participants and learn all of the participants' needs.
- If negotiations stall, point out what the other side has to lose if you're not able to come to an agreement.
- Make sure that your body language, tone of voice, and words convey the same message. You won't be believable if you're giving an ultimatum but you shuffle your papers nervously. At the same time, observe the body language and tone of the other party during the negotiations to determine what's truly important to the other side and how they feel about your offers.